

Message Text

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ACTION A-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-03 AID-01 NSC-06 SS-07 CCO-00 /019 W

-----222241 003895 /70

P 222140Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0454

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MEXICO 2141

PASS ALSO JOHN THOMAS (A) AND LAWRENCE PEZZULLO (H)

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: OREP SNAR MX

SUBJECT: CODEL SLACK - NARCOTICS DISCUSSIONS WITH GOM

1. SUMMARY: CODEL SLACK MET FEB. 18 WITH MEX DEPUTY ATTORNEYS GENERAL FOR BRIEFING ON MEX ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT AND WIDE-RANGING EXCHANGE OF VIEWS THROUGH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING BRIEFINGS AT EMB AFTERNOON FEB. 18, CODEL SLACK TRAVELLED TO AG'S OFFICE FOR BRIEFING AND EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON NARCOTICS CONTROL. AG FLORES, WHO ORIGINALLY AGREED TO MEET CODEL, WAS INDISPOSED AND INSTRUCTED MANUEL ROSALES-MIRANDA (FIRST DEPUTY AG), SAMUEL ALBA-LYEVA (SECOND DEPUTY AG AND MEX NARCOTICS COORDINATOR), FERNANDO BAEZA-MELENDZ (EXO) AND ARMANDO LOPEZ-SANTIBANEZ (HEAD OF INTELLIGENCE) TO BRIEF GROUP.

3. MEETING BEGAN WITH DESCRIPTION BY ALBA-LEYVA OF AG ORGANIZATION AND ZONE-BY-ZONE ACCOUNT OF NARCOTICS CONTROL EFFORT IN ALL 12 AG ZONES. ALBA-LEYVA NOTED THAT ERADICATION EFFORT HAD BEEN COMPLETED IN NORTHEAST PORTION OF GUERRERO BUT THAT REPLANTING BY ILLICIT GROWERS MADE IT NECESSARY TO RETURN TO THAT AREA. HE DESCRIBED ZONE 6 (PORTIONS OF SINALOA, CHIHUAHUA AND DURANGO) AS MOST IMPORTANT ERADICATION AREA, PRODUCING APPROX 65 PERCENT OF ALL MEX OPIUM AND ABSORBING MOST AG
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RESOURCES.

4. ALBA-LEYVA ALSO DESCRIBED ROLE OF MEX MILITARY, WITH NAVY RESPONSIBLE FOR PATROL AND INTERDICTION ON BOTH COASTS AND ARMY ASSISTING IN ERADICATION AND INTERDICTION COUNTRY-WIDE. HE ILLUSTRATED WITH SLIDES NATURE OF TERRAIN IN WHICH BOTH POPPY AND MARIJUANA ARE GROWN, SHOWED PICTURES OF LAST WEEK'S

INCINERATION OF 80 TONS OF MARIJUANA SEIZED BY ARMY IN
BADIGUARATO, AND EXPLAINED TESTS HE HAD CONDUCTED IN FIELD WITH
MOTORIZED BACK-PACK SPRAYER.

5. ALBA LEYVA INFORMED CODEL THAT BETWEEN 1 DEC 76 AND 11 FEB 77
GOM HAD DESTROYED 12,595 POPPY FIELDS AND 3,853 MARIJUANA
FIELDS. HE SAID AG HAD TOTAL OF 461 PERSONNEL DEDICATED
TO THIS EFFORT. BROKEN DOWN AS FOLLOWS: 251 FEDERAL JUDICIAL
POLICE (FJP) AGENTS (OF TOTAL FJP AGENT STAFF OF 600), 50
PILOTS, 57 AVIATION MECHANICS, 10 MAINTENANCE SUPERVISORS,
30 ADMIN PERSONNEL, 12 DISTRICT ATTORNEYS (WHO SERVE AS CAMPAIGN
COORDINATORS IN EACH ZONE), 14 AGROMONISTS (VISUAL RECON SPOTTERS
WHO IDENTIFY FIELDS FOR DESTRUCTION) AND 37 RADIO OPERATORS.

6. ALBA-LEYVA PROVIDED FOLLOWING ESTIMATED YEARLY
EXPENDITURES BY AG (AMOUNTS IN PESOS):

DISTRICT ATTORNEY COORDINATORS: 1,870,000

AVIATION FUEL: 24,000,000

REMOTE SENSING PERSONNEL: 1,700,000

FJP AGENTS: 37,000,000

AIR OPS PERSONNEL: 13,000,000

RADIO PERSONNEL: 2,000,000

OVERTIME PAYMENTS: 67,000,000

PER DIEM: 3,000,000

MISC EXPENDITURES: 1,200,000

CLOTHING: 1,000,000

LUBRICANTS: 5,700,000

HERBICIDES: 10,000,000

VEHICLE PARTS AND REPAIR: 31,000,000

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COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENTS: 9,000,000

AIRCRAFT INSPECTION: 1,500,000

TOTAL: 208,970,000

7. (COMMENT: ABOVE TOTAL AT RATE OF 22 PESOS TO US\$1.00
IS APPROX 7 \$9.5 MILLION. ALBA-LEYVA NOTED THAT THIS DOES NOT
INCLUDE 27 MILLION PESOS RECENTLY PROVIDED BY PRESIDENT OR
EXPENDITURES MADE BY MEX MILITARY IN SUPPORT OF NARCOTICS
EFFORT.)

8. ALBA-LEYVA SPOKE HIGHLY OF DEA AGENTS WORKING IN MEXICO,
NOTING THAT THEY FLY RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS IN HAZARDOUS
TERRAIN SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH MEXICANS. HE ALSO PRAISED USG
CONTRACT PERSONNEL WORKING ON REMOTE SENSING PROJECT, SAYING
THEIR PARTICIPATING PERMITTED MEXICANS TO CONCENTRATE EFFORTS
ON VISUAL RECON. HE DESCRIBED FREE FLOW OF INFO BETWEEN DEA
AND HIS OFFICE, SAYING THAT SIMPLE PHONE CALL FROM EITHER SIDE
ELICITED EXCHANGE OF INFO. HE EXPRESSED PARTICULAR GRATITUDE

FOR DEA OFFER TO OPEN ITS COMPUTER FILES TO MEX AG' SOFFICE.

9. CONCLUDING BRIEFING, ALBA-LEYVA SAID ERADICATION CAMPAIGN WAS NOW AVERAING 500 POPPY FIELDS DESTROYED PER DAY, DESCRIBED RECENT INCIDENT IN WHICH BOTH MEXICAN AND EA AIRCRAFT WERE FIRED UPON AND WHICH RESULTED IN SEIZURE OF AIRCRAFT IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. ON BEHALF OF AG, ALBA-LEYVA EXTENDED INVITATION TO CODEL MEMBERS TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON ONE OF HIS FREQUENT FIELD VISITS, EITHER DURING CODEL'S PRESENT VISIT OR AT LATER DATE.

10. DURING LENGTHY, FREE-FLOWING QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION BETWEEN CODEL MEMBERS AND ALL REPS OF AG'S OFFICE, FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL POINTS MADE:

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ACTION A-01

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0455

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PASS ALSO JOHN THOMAS (A) AND LAWRENCE PEZZULLO(B)

A. POPPY LIFE SPAN IS APPROXIMATELY 3-4 MONTHS FROM PLANTING TO HARVEST. IN CULIACAN AREA CLIMATE PERMITS ONE CROP PER YEAR, WHILE THREE CROPS ARE POSSIBLE IN GUERRERO. POPPY DOES NOT GROW WILD, BUT MARIJUANA DOES. CULTIVATION OF BOTH HAVE ALWAYS BEEN OUTLAWED.

B. MEXICAN ERADICATION EFFORT BEGAN IN 1948, BUT DID NOT REACH INTENSIFIED STAGE UNTIL ABOUT SIX YEARS. AGO. PENALTY FOR GROWING IS 2-11 YEARS, FOR TRAFFICKING 3-15 YEARS.

C. SINCE 01 DEC 76, MEXICO HAS DESTROYED 16 HEROIN LABORATORIES, NEARLY ALL OF WHICH WERE VIGOROUSLY DEFENDED BY TRAFFICKERS. INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THAT POPPY FARMERS ARE FINANCED EITHER BY LABORATORY OPERATORS THEMSELVES OR BY INTERMEDIARIES WHO COLLECT GUM FOR SALE TO LABS.

D. WHILE THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT U.S. ORGANIZED CRIME ELEMENTS FREQUENTLY VISIT TRAFFICKING AREAS, THERE IS LITTLE INFORMATION TO INDICATE THAT THEY ARE MOTIVATING FORCE BEHIND POPPY CULTIVATION OR HEROIN CONVERSION. WEAPONS DO FIGURE IN TRAFFIC, BUT ARE NOT PRIMARY MEANS OF PAYMENT.

E. MEXICO DOES NOT HAVE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT. MAXIMUM PENALTY FOR ANY OFFENSE IS 40 YEARS.

F. HERBICIDES BEING USED HAVE NO PERMANENT EFFECTS ON SOIL. AG NOW USING ESTERON (A FORM OF 2-4-D) AGAINST POPPY AND GRAMAXONE AGAINST

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MARIJUANA. BOTH ARE SYSTEMIC HORMONAL HERBICIDES WHICH HAVE BEEN TESTED AND APPROVED BOTH BY ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE AND MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE.

G. MEXICO DOES NOT HAVE NARCTICS OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO WORK IN UNITED STATES AND, ALTHOUGH OFFER HAS BEEN MADE BY USG, SEES NO NEED TO PLACE PERSONNEL IN THE U.S. SINCE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ALREADY FREE AND TIMELY.

H. CURRENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY WAS FORMULATED BY TASKING EACH ZONE COORDINATOR TO DEVELOP PLAN FOR HIS ZONE BY 15 DEC 76. PLANS WERE COMBINED AND REWORKED IN MEXICO CITY TO FORM NATIONAL PLAN WHICH WNET INTO EFFECT IN LATE DECEMBER, PERMITTING EARLIER START THEN PREVIOUS YEARS

WITH RESULTING RECORD ILLICIT CROP DESTRUCTION THUS FAR.

I. BECAUSE OF PROMISING CAMPAIGN RESULTS THUS FAR, AG EXPECTS NOTABLE EFFECT ON HEROIN TRAFFIC THIS SPRING. ACCORDING TO MEXICAN MILITARY REPORT FROM OAXACA, TRAFFICKERS ARE REFUSING TO FINANCE ILLIGIT PLANTINGS BECAUSE THEY EXPECT DESTRUCTION AND FEEL THIS "NOT GOOD BUSINESS."

J. HEROIN USE IN MEXICO IS MINIMAL AND VIRTUALLY 100 PERECENT OF PRODUCTION IS DESTINED FOR EXPORT TO UNITED STATES. ONE RECENT REPORT INDICATES THAT ABOUT 12 PERCENT OF MARIJUANA CROP IS CONSUMED LOCALLY.

K. RECENT CASE IN TIJUANA(WHICH ALBA-LEYVA SAID POSSIBLE ONLY BECAUSE OF TIMELY EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION BETWEEN DEA AND MEXICANS) INVOLVED 136 KILOGRAMS OF COCAINE AND ONLY FIVE KILOGRAMS OF HEROIN. THIS MAY INDICATE THAT HEROIN BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN AND TRAFFICKERS MOVING TOWARD COCAINE FROM SOUTH AMERICA.

L. MEXICAN NARCOTICS EFFORT IS COORDINATED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL BUT REQUIRES MAJOR PARTICIPATION OF MEXICAN MILITARY WHICH OPERATES INDEPENDENTLY IN FIELD BUT REPORTS RESULTS TO ATTORNEY GENERAL. MILITARY PARTICIPATION ALSO PERMITS GOM TO EXTEND ITS EFFORTS INTO MORE AREAS THAT IT COULD USING ONLY LIMITED FJP AGENTS.

M. POPPY HAS NO SALVAGE VALUE AFTER HERBICIDE APPLICATION AS PLANT WILTS AFTER FOUR HOURS AND GUM CANNOT BE OBTAINED. MARIJUANA DISINTEGRATES AFTER ONE-TWO DAYS AND CANNOT BE PACKED. IF

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TRAFFICKER ATTEMPTED TO SELL MARIJUANA IMMEDIATELY AFTER SPRAYING, PURCHASER WOULD BE STUCK WITH UNUSABLE PRODUCT AND WOULD PROBABLY ATTEMPT TO KILL SELLER IN RETALIATION.

11. SUMMING UP MEETING, REOSALES-MIRANDA POINTED OUT THAT ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT WILL SOON BE REQUIRED TO PURSUE ANTICIPATED PRODUCTION IN NEW AREAS AS CAMPAIGN GENERATES SUCCESSFUL IMPACT IN PRESENT PRODUCTION AREAS. IN THIS CONNECTION, ALBA-LEYVA NOTED THAT SOME POPPY HAS BEEN LOCATED IN SOUTHERN STATE OF CHIAPAS BUT THAT AG HAS NO

HELICOPTERS AVAILABLE TO SEND THERE BECAUSE FULL FLEET NEEDED IN PRESENT AREAS OF POPPY CONCENTRATION. HE ADDED THAT A DEA AIRCRAFT WITH MEXICAN CHIEF OF REMOTE SENSING WAS NOW SURVEYING CHIAPAS TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF PROBLEM.

12. CODEL STATED ITS APPRECIATION FOR OPEN AND FRANK NATURE OF MEETING AND EXPRESSED ITS WISH THAT THERE WAS SOME WAY THAT PARENTS OF U.S. CHILDREN WHO WOULD NOT DIE OF DRUG OVERDOSE COULD CONVEY THEIR GRATITUDE TO PARENTS OF MEXICAN SOLDIERS AND AGENTS WHO DIE IN MEXICAN ANTI-NARCOTICS EFFORT.

13. THIS MESSAGE CLEARED BY CODEL.
THOMPSON

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Message Attributes

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